

REMARKS

Applicants thank the Examiner for the very thorough consideration given the present application.

Claims 1-5, 7-10, 12-15, and 17-21 are now present in this application. Claims 1 and 10 are independent. By this amendment, claims 1, 7-10, 17-19, and 21 have been amended.

Reconsideration of this application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

Claim Objections

The Examiner has objected to claims 1 and 10 because of minor informalities. In order to overcome this objection, Applicants have amended claims 1 and 10 in order to correct the deficiencies pointed out by the Examiner. Reconsideration and withdrawal of this objection are respectfully requested.

Examiner Interview

Applicants wish to thank the Examiner for the courtesies extended to Applicants' representative during the telephone interview that was conducted on July 12, 2007. An Examiner Interview Summary was made of record as Paper No. 20070712. During the interview, Applicants' representative discussed proposed changes to the claims to overcome the prior art rejections of record with respect to independent claims 1 and 10. The Examiner agreed that the proposed changes would overcome current rejection of claims 1 and 10 as being anticipated by Kronbetter. The claims have been amended in the manner discussed during the interview, and are believed to place the application into condition for allowance. Accordingly, reconsideration and allowance of the present application are respectfully requested.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1-5, 7-10, 12-15, and 17-21 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Kronbetter. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

A complete discussion of the Examiner's rejection is set forth in the Office Action, and is not being repeated here.

While not conceding the appropriateness of the Examiner's rejection, but merely to advance prosecution of the instant application, Applicants respectfully submit that independent claim 1 has been amended to recite a combination of elements in a gasket including "a ring protrusion protruding toward a center of the third opening between the one and the other ends of the leakage preventing part to block a gap between the second and third openings, the ring protrusion having a front end defining a front end opening and a rear end defining a rear end opening, with the rear end being closer to the drum than the front end, and a diameter of the front end of the protrusion being greater than a diameter of the rear end opening of the protrusion." Applicants respectfully submit that this combination of elements as set forth in independent claim 1 is not disclosed or made obvious by the prior art of record, including Kronbetter, as discussed more fully during the **Examiner Interview** discussed above. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection are respectfully requested.

With regard to dependent claims 2-5, 7-9, and 20, Applicants submit that these claims depend, either directly or indirectly, from independent claim 1, which is allowable for the reasons set forth above, and therefore these claims are allowable based on their dependence from claim 1. Reconsideration and allowance thereof are respectfully requested.

While not conceding the appropriateness of the Examiner's rejection, but merely to advance prosecution of the instant application, Applicants respectfully submit that independent claim 10 has been amended to recite a combination of elements in a drum washing machine including "a ring protrusion protruding toward a center of the third opening between the one and the other ends of the leakage preventing part to block a gap between the second and third openings, the ring protrusion having a front end defining a front end opening and a rear end defining a rear end opening, with the rear end being closer to the drum than the front end, and a diameter of the front end of the protrusion being greater than a diameter of the rear end opening of the protrusion." Applicants respectfully submit that this combination of elements as set forth in independent claim 10 is not disclosed or made obvious by the prior art of record, including Kronbetter, as discussed more fully during the **Examiner Interview** discussed above. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection are respectfully requested.

With regard to dependent claims 12-15, 17-19, and 21, Applicants submit that these claims depend, either directly or indirectly, from independent claim 10, which is allowable for the reasons set forth above, and therefore these claims are allowable based on their dependence from claim 10. Reconsideration and allowance thereof are respectfully requested.

Conclusion

All of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot.

Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all presently outstanding rejections and that they be withdrawn.

It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action, and as such, the present application is in condition for allowance.

If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone James T. Eller, Jr., Registration No. 39,538, at (703) 205-8000, in the Washington, D.C. area.

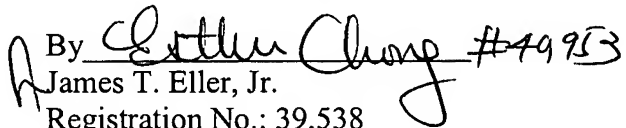
Prompt and favorable consideration of this Amendment is respectfully requested.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Dated: August 10, 2007

Respectfully submitted,

Caw

By  #49953
James T. Eller, Jr.
Registration No.: 39,538
BIRCH, STEWART, KOLASCH & BIRCH, LLP
8110 Gatehouse Road
Suite 100 East
P.O. Box 747
Falls Church, Virginia 22040-0747
(703) 205-8000
Attorney for Applicants